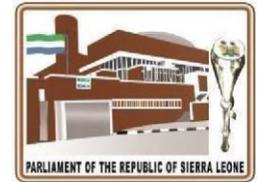




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16th MARCH, 2022

**PRESS RELEASE**



**SPEAKER EXTOLS EU TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO PARLIAMENT**

The Speaker of Parliament, Rt Hon. Dr. Abass Chernor Bundu has on Wednesday 16th March 2022 commended the European Union (EU) for the Governance Sector Programme support to the Parliament of Sierra Leone. The Speaker made this statement at the 3rd Technical Coordination Group (TCG) meeting on the parliament's component of the Governance Programme. The TCG, satisfied with the progress on implementation and the outcomes emerging from the technical assistance provided so far, approved the next 6 monthly workplan until September.

The Speaker of Parliament, who is also Chairman of the TCG in his welcome statement acknowledged the contribution made by the European Union's support to Parliament, and urged that the continuation of the partnership, given the critical role of the technical assistance to parliament's capacity building efforts. "We have made significant progress and at this place today, because of your support" he stated, "I want to reassure you that

Parliament will make even bigger strides, if EU continue to support us". The Speaker maintained that, the support had moved Parliament from strength to strength. He spoke about the impact of COVID-19 globally and on Sierra Leone.

The Hon Speaker then acknowledged that there are competing demands on EU, but he appealed to the latter not to relegate Parliament to the back. "Be patient with us and keep us alive, we making progress" the Speaker added.

A representative of the EU delegation at the meeting, who is also team leader of EU Governance Programme, Ms. Serena Bertaina on behalf of the Head of Delegation of European Union in Sierra Leone assured the Speaker of EU's commitment to Parliament under the Governance sector support. Ms. Bertaina stressed that, the support to parliament will continue and that the next EU multi annual programme starting in 2024 will equally provide for and build on the successes of the current assistance to parliament.

After review and adjustments made to minutes of the previous TCG, The Speaker moved a motion for adoption of the minutes and it was seconded by Rev Alusine Diamond Suma and the minutes adopted accordingly.

After the adoption of the minutes the Speaker used the opportunity to repeat his dissatisfaction over another EU project to parliament on infrastructure improvement and rehabilitation, but the EU representatives present assured The Speaker that remedial measures have been triggered and that the contractor will address any shortcomings in implementation of the infrastructure project before it's closure.

Following the adoption of the minutes and then the agenda for the 3rd TCG meeting , Mr. Adams Fusheini, the Key Expert to Parliament on the EU Programme presented the progress report and next work plan for discussion and approval. This was followed by a presentation on achievement by the Director of the Department of Programmes, Research and Partnerships, Mr. Gilbert Nhabay. The results and capacity improvements reported on included institutional strengthening in various departments and themes, namely on budget analysis, e-Parliament initiatives, and enhanced coordination of partnerships and technical delivery to stakeholders in parliament.

In particular the Bo Declaration that was supported by EU and the WFD helped Parliament's leaders to focus more and parliamentary business has been steady since and improving. Also, key technical units of Parliament like the Centre For Strategy and Parliamentary Studies (CSPS), Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO), Department for Programme, Research and Partnership, and ICT Department are demonstrating improved capacity and growing their capability to bridge the usual capacity due high attrition of MPs. These units are benefiting as anchors of capacity and expertise in parliament, with the support of the EU Programme so

they are trainers for staff and MPs in the future, thus ensuring sustainable capacity for parliament.

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